DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 149 412 CS 502 002

AUTHOR Carroll, Cyril J.
TITLE Innovations in Introduction to Theatre Courses.
PUB DATE Mar 76
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Communication Association (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, March 1976)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Community Colleges; *Course Descriptions; Course Objectives; *Curriculum Guides; Educational Innovation; Higher Education; Learning Activities; *Performance Contracts; Student Participation; *Team Teaching; *Theater Arts

ABSTRACT

An introductory theatre course at Prince George's Community College (Maryland), taught by a team of three instructors, makes use of contract grading to permit students to become actively involved in theatre on several levels of interest. This paper describes the course and provides a course syllabus, list of contract options for the course, and a sample student grade contract. It also briefly describes two more-traditional introductory theatre courses taught at Essex Community College (Maryland) and University of Maryland Baltimore County and includes the syllabus for the university course. (GW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED149412

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Innovations In Introduction to Theatre Courses

Cyril J. Carroll, Moderator

Robert Stoltzfust, Participants
Guy LeValley
Elaine Kass
Dr. Alice Robinson

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Cyril J. Carroll

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

ECA Annual Convention
Philadelphia, PA
March 1976

CS502002

EASTERN COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION
67th Annual Convention
Bellevue Stratford Hotel
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Sunday, 2:00p. m. -3:30 p. m. Tecumseh Room

Innovations In Introduction

To Theatre Courses

Moderator: Cyril J. Carroll, Prince George's Community College

Participants:

Robert Stoltzfust, Essex Community College, "Making the Introduction to Theatre Course Appeal to More Students."

Guy LeValley, Elaine Kass, and Cyril J. Carroll, Prince George's Community College, "Team Teaching the Introduction to Theatre Course."

Dr. Alice Robinson, University of Maryland Baltimore County, "What Should Be Happening in the Introduction to Theatre Course?"

EASTERN COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION
67th Annual Convention
Bellevue Stratford Hotel
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Sunday, 2:00--3:30 p.m. Tecumseh Room

Innovations In Introduction

To Theatre Courses

The presentation at the 67th Annual Convention was well attended by faculty members from both four year and two year institutions of higher education. The program included presentations of Introduction to Theatre course offerings as they are being conducted at three institutions--Essex Community College, Prince George's Community College, and University of Maryland Baltimore County. Each group explained the objectives, methods of teaching, course materials, subject matter, textbooks, and projections of the success of the course. The audience also was very active in their participation with both questions and comments about different approaches to teaching this course.

The first presentation was made by Robert Stoltzfust, instructor from Essex Community College in Baltimore County, Maryland. He described the approach being used at his college as probably the classic approach used by those who stress the aesthetic value of theatre, reading and analysis of the script, very traditional view of forms of theatre. The course is being presented to non-theatre majors who are fulfilling the humanities requirement. The basic teaching method was lecture with some discussion in class. The use of local community theatre people was also incorporated into the program. Usually, this was the inclusion of some actor, director, or other person from the community who was active in either the professional or community theatre area. Mr. Stoltzfust did indicate some concern with attempting to increase the enrollment in the course.

The second presentation was made by three faculty members from Prince George's Community College, Speech Communication and Theatre Department. Cyril J. Carroll, Elaine Kass, and Guy LeValley described their experiences of team teaching the Introduction to Theatre courses at their college. An explanation of four basic goals for using a team teaching approach were discussed. These goals were:

1. To make better use of the talents and expertise of the theatre faculty.

2. To stimulate more interest among students.

3. To provide students with a more varied view of the different approaches to theatre.

4. To stimulate our theatre faculty to create audio and visual instructional materials.

The three members of the Prince George's faculty explained the different aspects of the program as it is being taught at their college. The conclusions of this report in regard to each of the objectives was discussed. At our college we have indeed found that the quality of the Introduction to Theatre course has improved as a result of two factors: a)the introduction of the team teaching approach, which allowed the faculty members to contribute more freely from their own individual backgrounds in theatre, b) the introduction of Contract Grading which allowed the student to participate on several levels of interest. The contract approach resulted in more involvement by students in the active participation in theatre production on stage and viewing both campus and professional theatrical productions in the Washington metropolitan area. Through the team approach the faculty has developed a course which offers the student more opportunities to become involved in theatre through the aesthetic experience of watching performances or through the actual experience of direct involvement of theatre production.

At the present time, the Introduction to Theatre program has grown to four sections (three during the day and one at night) which offers the student a wider range of times to schedule the course. We believe that through our approach to the course we will be able to expand the opportunities for offering the course in the future.

Each member of the team teaching unit has been stimulated to bring his/her unique vision of the theatre experience to their classroom teaching. The background of the three people includes--acting, directing, and technical theatre--with experience in professional, educational, and community theatre. Through the use of audio-cassette slide presentations,lectures, three member discussions, video tape, and actual demonstration the team has been able to provide the students with a varied experience.

The final goal which was stated earlier has also been successfully achieved by our faculty. Several audio and visual instructional packages have been developed for the students taking the Introduction to Theatre course. These include video tapes on such topics: "Styles of Directing," "Instant Theatre,":"Stage Lighting," and others which are in the planning stages. Several audio-slide cassettee packages have been put together on various aspects of production. The main stage productions which represent a variety of theatrical styles have also been video-taped, these include: "The Adding Machine," "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern," "The Devil's Disciple," and "The Tender Land," as well as editing many of the PBS television production for use in the class.

We think that our approach to the course has stimulated many students to be more creative as they are taking this course. Some of the original work that has been developed by students includes: original short plays (which are produced on campus), original films on different aspects of theater--acting, history, community involved projects, and excellent research projects.

The program at PGCC has been evaluated by students taking the course. We have found that the majority of our students has found the opporunities presented to them in the course to be stimulating and rewarding both in an academic way and in opening up the theatre as an aesthetic experience for them. The program at our college is still evolving and will continue to approach and the Introduction to Theatre course with anticipation of developing ways of strengthing the academic and aesthetic qualities of the course.

Dr. Alice Robinson, course coordinator for the Introduction to Theatre course at University of Maryland Baltimore County presented the description of the course offering at their college. Dr. Robinson indicated that their program has several objectives including: interest students in theatre, develop an audience for the future, and to allow the student the opportunity to experience the creative process. The activities which were experienced by students in this course included: seeing plays at Center Stage in Baltimore, attending the main stage productions on campus, involvement in simulated theatre production staff, and guest lectures and outstanding films during class. The class content included special attention to teaching students how to read a play, students had to read several plays outside of class. The students were also involved in role playing situation in class which were improvised to allow students to develop their imaginations and experience the problems of projecting emotions. Each class was also divided into small groups, these groups would be designated specific production roles--producer, director, actors, technical people etc. These groups would then take a specific play and plan all the various aspects of production and then present them to the rest of the class. The program at UMBC, although it reflected many of the traditional values of the Introduction to Theatre course did allow for initimate student involvement which makes taking this course a more exciting experience.

I have included all of the written materials which were handed out to those attending the conference, including: syllabi, program descriptions, sample course grade contract, and list of those who participated in the program.

UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND, BALTIMORE CAMPUS — Theatre Department
Introduction to the Theatre — Spring, 1976 — Robinson

Textbooks: The Theater Experience by Edwin Wilson
Drama, an Introductory Anthology, edited by Otto Reinert

		Assignments
Mon., Feb. 2	Introduction to the course	Read the Introduction and Ch. I in the text
Wed., Feb. 4	Discuss the theatre experience--the performer and the audience	Read Chapters 2 & 3
Fri., Feb 6	Discuss the role of the audience	Read Chapter 4. Make a list of the various roles that you play.
Mon., Feb. 9	Discuss everyday acting and role playing. Improvise some scenes in which you play one of your many roles.	Read Chapter 5
Wed., Feb 11	The actor's training -- observation and imagination	Observe a person, how he walks and acts; or recreate an incident in your life; or prepare a pantomime using the "Magic If."
Fri., Feb. 13	Show the class the person you have observed, recreate an incident in your life, or present a pantomime.	
Mon., Feb. 16	Continue pantomimes and improvisations. Divide the class into groups to prepare group improvisations.	Read A View from the Bridge
Wed., Feb. 18	Perform group improvisations.	
Fri., Feb. 20	Period left open for films, guests, or special events.	
Mon., Feb 23	Discuss the characters in A View from the Bridge. Improvise a scene around Eddie or another character	Read Chapter 6. Read Oedipus the King
Wed., Feb. 25	Read scenes from A View from the Bridge. Discuss Chapter 6.	Read Chapter 7.
Fri., Feb. 27	Discuss Chapter 7. What is plot?	Read Chapter 8, pp 119-124
Mon., March 1	The Greek Theatre--slides showing the ancient Greek theatres	
Wed., March 3	Discuss Oedipus the King.	Read Macbeth
Fri., March 5	Period left open for films, guests, or special events.	Read Chapter 8, pp. 124-132
Mon., March 8	Shakespeare's theatre	
Wed., March 10	Discuss Macbeth. Compare Oedipus the King and Macbeth in plot structure.	Read Chapter 10.
Fri., March 12	Scenes from Macbeth.	
Mon., March 15	Discuss Oedipus and Macbeth as tragedies	
Wed., March 17	Exam	Read The Lesson. Read Chapter 8 pp. 132-145

Fri., March 19	Discuss Theatre of the Absurd	
Mon., March 22	Discuss The Lesson. Read scenes from The Lesson.	Read The Wild Duck. Read Chapter 11.
Wed., March 24	Discuss realism and non-realism. Assign production project.	
Fri., March 26	Period left open for films, guest, or special events.	
Mon., March 29	Discuss The Wild Duck.	Read Tartuffe. Read Chapter 11.
Wed., March 31.	Discuss comedy and farce.	Write a comic scene based on incongruity or automatism or describe two comic entrance.
Fri., April 2	Discuss comedy in Tartuffe. Show slides of production of Tartuffe.	
Mon., April 5	Read scenes from Tartuffe. Divide class into production groups.	Read Chapter 12.
Wed., April 7	Exam	
Fri., April 9	Discuss stage space. Let production groups meet together.	Read Chapter 13.
Mon., April 12	Discuss scene design. Show slides.	
Wed., April 14	Discuss scene design. Show slides.	
Fri., April 16	Holiday	
Mon., April 19	Holiday	
Wed., April 21	Visit the UMBC theatre	Read Chapter 14
Fri., April 23	Period left open for films, guests, or special events.	
Mon., April 26	Discuss costume design and make-up	
Wed., April 28	Discuss costume design and make-up	Read Chapter 15
Fri., April 30	The director. How the director prepares.	
Mon., May 3	The director. Rehearsals.	Read Chapter 16
Wed., May 5	Discuss Chapter 16 and the theatre experience.	
Fri., May 7	Production Groups 1 and 2 present their ideas for the production of their plays.	
Mon., May 10	Production Groups 3 and 4 present their ideas for the production of their plays	

Wed., May 12	Production Groups 5 and 6 present their ideas.
Fri., May 14	Summary of the course.

Activities and Assignments:

1. Each student is required to see the UMBC production of The Servant of Two Masters.
2. Hopefully, the entire class will be able to go to a production at Center State.
3. The class may visit either Center Stage or the Theatre Project to see theatre space.
4. Instead of a term paper, each student will work in a production group. Each production group will choose a play for a hypothetical production of that play. Each group will have a director, one or two costume designers, or a lighting designer. At the end of the semester each group will present before the class its ideas for the production of the play. Detailed instructions will be given out.
5. Several Fridays are left open for special events, films, or guest speakers. On these days the class may meet with the other sections of Introductiom to the Theatre.

SPCM 141 Introduction to the Theatre
Mr. Carroll, Miss Kass, Mr. LeValley

SYLLABUS

I. Nature of the Course: This course explores theatrical experience through the study of various types, styles, and production techniques of the theatre. Students have the opportunity to attend performances at local professional and university theatres as well as participate in PGCC's theatrical productions. The course also explores the relationship between theatre as a public art and its impact upon our culture.

II. Required Textbook: Kenneth M. Cameron and Theodore J. C. Woffman, A Guide to Theatre Study, second edition, 1974.

Supplemental Materials: Several books, films, and slides will be placed on reserve in the LRC. These items will be brought to your attention during the course of the semester.

III. Course Requirements: In order to make the instruction more individualized in nature, we are structuring the course as a Contract Plan. All students will be responsible for mastery of common areas of the syllabus, which will be listed below. This will be done so that all students are familiar with basic concepts of theatre arts. The standards and requirements for each grade level (A,B,C) will be explained on the instruction sheet for the Contract. Each student will be given the option to select the emphasis of his involvement either in academic or production depending upon his interest or his abilities. The common area of responsibility for each student are listed below:

1. Read each of the chapters assigned in the textbook and any special reading assignments which will be given during the course of the semester.
2. Take three quizzes during the semester.
3. Attend one theatrical production at a professional theatre, university theatre, or community theatre in the area.
4. Attend the two major theatrical productions on campus and write a review of these plays.
5. Attend one of the Reader's Theatre productions on campus and attend the Experimental theatre production on campus.

IV. Regular attendance is expected of all students in this course. Missing classes to work on SPCM department productions is not considered acceptable, unless specific permission is obtained from the instructor in your section.

V. This course will be team taught by the instructors listed at the top of the page. We will be working together to keep the course interesting and rewarding throughout the semester. Each instructor will determine how his individual section will complete the course work described in the Syllabus. Additional assignments will be given throughout the semester--thus the syllabus will alter, be aware of this possibility.

SPCM 141 Introduction to the Theatre
Syllabus

I. Week one: Orientation to the course, explanation of syllabus, contract plan, participation and attendance at performance, etc. Discussion of the Nature of the Theatre--theatre as communication, orgins of theatre, theatre as it exist today.
Assignment: Read Chapter 1 "The Nature of Theatre," pp. 3-17, Guide to Theatre Study.
Read Chapter 5 "Directing," pp. 303-340, Guide to Theatre Study,
**This chapter should be read carefully, we will be talking about the director during the 2nd and 3rd week.
See--Directing Styles on reserve on VTR cassett tape in LRC.

II. Discussion of the Direction of a play. Team will explore with class some of the approaches to directing, functions of a director, and some of the problems of the director.
Assignment: Read Chapter 16, "Director," pp. 363-394, Oscar Brockett, The Theatre an Introduction, on reserve in the LRC.

III. Conclude the discussion of the director during this week and begin looking at the actor. Discussion of the actor will deal with styles of acting, approaches, to actor raining, and stage mechanics.
Assignment: Read Chapter 4 "Acting," pp. 259-300, Guide to Theatre Study.

IV. Continue with discussion of the actor. Team will attempt to illustrate some of the problems involved in preparing for a role.
Assignment: Several articles will be placed on reserve in LRC.
Class will view film--Mime in class.

V. Conclude the discussion of the actor. Quiz will be given on the material covered to this point--Nature of Theatre, Director, Actor. If time permits make-up demonstration will be given.
Assignment: Read Chapter 6 "Design, " pp. 343-393 Guide to Theatre Study
**This chapter will be discussed in three stages--Designing, Lighting and costumes.

VI. During this week we will continue with discussion of the technical aspects of theatre production. Focus on the concepts, language of technical theatre, and actual tour of our theatre plant will be included.
Assignment: Read Chapter 11 "Theatre Architecture," pp. 231-271, Whiting, An Introduction to the Theatre, on reserve in the LRC. Class will also view slides illustrating scenic design.

VII. Conclude discussion of the technical theatre. Short quiz on technical theatre will be given during this week. Begin discussion of playwright and script, criticism and the elements of drama. Discuss criticism and its role in tneatre.
Assignment: Read Chapter 3 "The Critical Analysis of Drama," pp. 219-255 Guide to Theatre Study.

SPCM 141 Introduction to the Theatre

Syllabus

VIII. Continue with discussion of playscript and analysis. Examine some examples. Begin discussion of Greek Classic theatre and its contribution to theatre. Probably will include technical aspects, style of acting, development of tragedy.
Assignment: Read Chapter 2 "Classics and Their Theatres," pp. 21-55, (Greek & Roman) Guide to Theatre Study.

IX. Begin discussion of the Medieval theatre, include mystery, miracle, and morality plays. Begin discussion of the Elizabethan theatre and the rise of new playwrights.
Assignment: Read Chapter 2 "Classics and Their Theatres," pp. 55-88, Guide to Theatre Study.
View VTR of Hamlet in Class, if student has not read Hamlet they probably should read it.

X. Continue with discussion of Shakespeare and Elizabethan Theatre. Discuss the Neo-Classic theatre in France--Racine, Moliere. Include Commedia . . . .
Assignment: Read Chapter 2 "Classics and Their Theatres," pp. 89-123, Guide to Theatre Study.

XI. Discussion of the Restoration Theatre and the Decline of Autocracy. Discuss the Romantic Theatre and its influence on Theatre.
Assignment: Read Chapter 2 "Classics and Their Theatres," pp. 124-142, Guide to Theatre Study.

XII. Begin the discussion of 19th Century and the rise of Realism. Include Russian and other European contributers . . . .
Assignment: Read Chapter 2 "Classics and Their Theatres," pp. 143-163, Guide to Theatre Study.

XIII. Continue with discussion of Realism in the Theatre . . . .
Assignment: Read Chapter 2 "Classics and Their Theatres," pp. 163-178, Guide to Theatre Study.

IVX. Discuss the theatre in the 20th century. . . . Epic theatre, Expressionism, Theatre of Crulty, Recent development in the theatre.
Assignment: Read Chapter 2 "Classics and Their Theatres," pp. 179-215, Guide to Theatre Study.

XV. Conclude discussion of the theatre today, what might happen in the future . . . .
Assignment: Read Chapter 7 "Careers in Theatre," pp. 397-410

******Additions to this basic syllabus may be made by individual instructors during the course of the semester.

SPCM 141 Introduction to the Theatre
Mr. Carroll, Miss Kass, Mr. LeValley

CONTRACT OPTIONS FOR THE COURSE

Core Elements of Contract

1. Read each chapter assigned in textbook and any supplemental readings.

2. Take three written quizzes and final exam (take-home).

3. Attend two major plays on campus and write a review.

4. Attend one theatrical production at professional, dinner, community, or universiy theatre and write a review.

****All students will achieve these task in terms of quantity. Options for completion of grade requirements for course are listed below:

A. Read plays from different periods of the theatre or plays which represent different styles and write a summarizing paper on the development of the play.

B. Research and write a paper on directing, acting, and technical theatre (specific area).

C. Develop a theatre journal which contains articles which relates what is happening in the Washington area in theatre. This can include articles about people, plays and theatre projects in the area.

D. A student may act in a main stage play as a lead or in two main stage plays as a minor character and write and present to class a paper on this experience.

E. A student may work on a technical crew for main stage productions and write a paper on this experience.

F. Work on Experimental theatre or Reader's Theatre as an actor or technician and write a paper.

G. Attend several plays at professional or university theatre and write a critical review of play. The number of plays will depend upon grade contract.

H. Experience with local community theaters, write a paper or present an oral presentation relating experience.

I. Do a research paper on various propositions, which will be given to you during the first week. Also present 15 to 20 minute oral report in class. These topics will relate to the material on theatre development.

J. Student may make arrangements with his or her instructor to do a creative project of his own to be developed during the course.

SPCM 141 Introduction to the Theatre
Grade Contract Requirements:

Grade of C

A. Need to complete reading assignments (_____).

B. Grade of acceptable on two quizzes (_____), (_____)
Grade of satisfactory on one quiz (_____)

C. Campus play reviews (_____), (_____), need grade of satisfactory.

D. Professional or University play (_____).

E. Readers Theatre (_____), Experimental Theatre (_____).

F. Select two projects from options 1. (_____) 2. (_____).

Grade of B

A. Need to complete readings (_____).

B. Grade of Highly acceptable on two quizzes (_____) (_____)
Grade of Acceptable or Satisfactory on one quiz (_____).

C Campus play reviews, one highly acceptable (____), one acceptable (____).

D. Professional or university play, need two plays with grade of acceptable.
(_____) (_____).

E. Readers Theater (_____), Experimental (_____), need grade of acceptable.

F. Select three projects from options need grade of acceptable.
1. (_____), 2. (_____), 3. (_____).

Grade of A

A. Need to complete readings (_____).

B. Grade of Highly acceptable on three quizes (_____).

C. Campus play reviews two highly acceptable (_____), (_____).

D. Professional or university play, need three plays with grade of highly acceptable.
(_____), (_____), (_____).

E. Readers Theatre (_____), Experimental (_____) grade Highly acceptable on both.

F. Select three projects from options grade Highly acceptable
(_____), (_____), (_____).

SPCM 141 Introduction to the Theatre
Mr. Carroll, Miss Kass, Mr. LeValley

GRADE CONTRACT

I,_____contract for a grade of_____ in SPCM 141 Introduction to the Theatre, Section _____for the _____ semester_____. I have read, understand, and agree to the requirements for accomplishing the above grade.

This contract will become void if any of the requirements are not met. I understand that I can renegoitiate my contract if I change my mind at any time until Friday, April 30, 1976. I understand that if I fail to meet the requirements I will receive the grade the Instructor deems fair.

_____ Students Number

_____ Signature of Student

_____ Signature of Faculty member

Notes of student/faculty conference on contract.